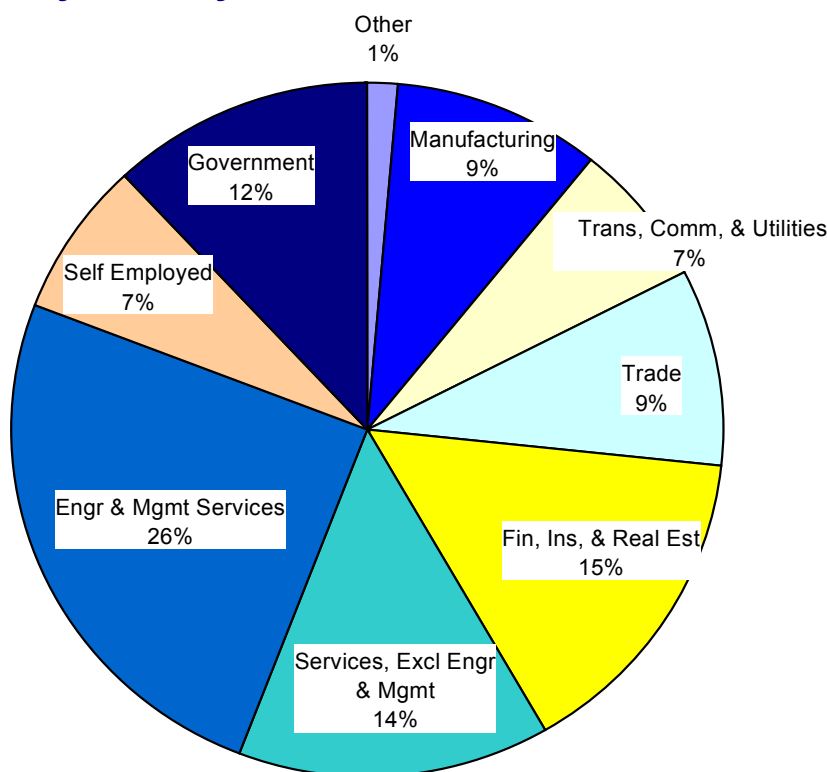


## Job Description

Accountants help to ensure that the Nation's firms are run more efficiently, its public records kept more accurately, and its taxes paid properly and on time. They perform these vital functions by offering an increasingly wide array of business and accounting services to their clients. These services include public and government accounting, as well as internal auditing. Accountants are broadening the services they offer to include budget analysis, financial and investment planning, information technology consulting, and limited legal services. Beyond the fundamental tasks of the occupation—preparing, analyzing, and verifying financial documents in order to provide information to clients—many accountants now are required to possess a wide range of knowledge and skills. Public accountants, many of whom are Certified Public Accountants (CPAs), generally have their own businesses or work for public accounting firms. Government accountants and auditors maintain and examine the records of government agencies and audit private businesses and individuals whose activities are subject to government regulations or taxation. Accountants employed by Federal, State, and local governments guarantee that revenues are received and expenditures are made in accordance with laws and regulations. Internal auditors verify the accuracy of their organization's records and check for mismanagement, waste, or fraud.

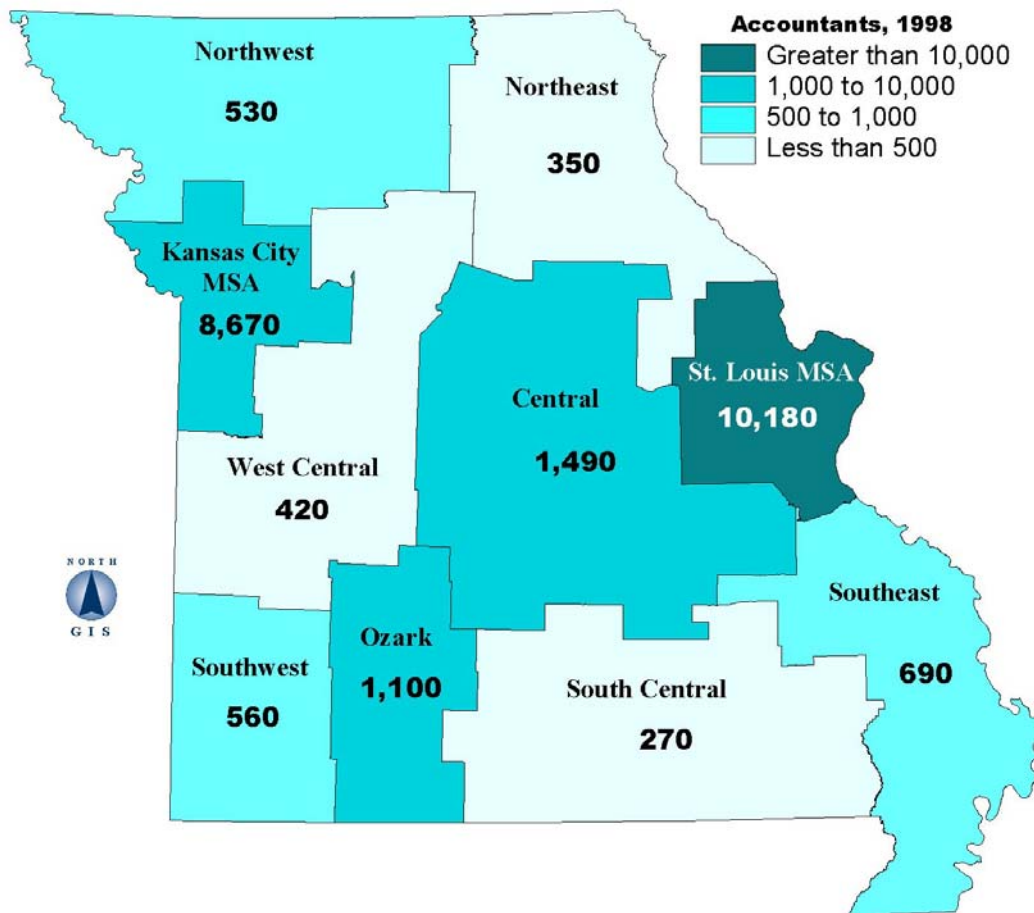
## Employment by Industry



## Employment Trends

Region	Employment		Projected Growth	Percent Change	Average Annual Openings
	1998	2008			
United States	1,080,000	1,202,000	122,000	11.3%	289,000
Missouri	19,860	21,080	1,220	6.1%	430
Northwest Region	530	500	-30	-5.7%	8
Northeast Region	350	370	20	5.7%	7
Kansas City MSA	8,670	9,540	870	10.0%	221
West Central Region	420	440	20	4.8%	9
Central Region	1,490	1,680	190	12.8%	42
St. Louis MSA	10,180	10,340	160	1.6%	173
Southwest Region	560	590	30	5.4%	12
Ozark Region	1,100	1,330	230	20.9%	40
South Central Region	270	310	40	14.8%	7
Southeast Region	690	770	80	11.6%	19

Source: Missouri Economic Research & Information Center, Projections Unit



## Wage Information

Region	Average Hourly Wage	Average Annual Wage
United States	\$20.91	\$43,493
Missouri	\$21.34	\$44,387
Northwest Region	\$18.09	\$37,627
Northeast Region	\$16.85	\$35,048
Kansas City MSA	\$22.62	\$47,050
West Central Region	\$19.23	\$39,998
Central Region	\$19.23	\$39,998
St. Louis MSA	\$20.74	\$43,139
Southwest Region	\$19.31	\$40,165
Ozark Region	\$17.83	\$37,086
South Central Region	\$26.08	\$54,246
Southeast Region	\$18.14	\$37,731

**Accountants in Missouri make \$44,387 per year, more than the national average. The occupation requires a baccalaureate degree with 150 college credit hours, passage of the Certified Public Accountant Exam and two years practice under an experienced CPA.**

Source: Missouri Economic Research & Information Center, Occupational Employment Statistics Unit

## Typical Tasks

- Analyzes operations to project future revenues and expenses.
- Develops, maintains, and analyzes budgets, and prepares periodic reports.
- Analyzes records of financial transactions to determine accuracy of entries.
- Prepares balance sheet, profit and loss statement, and other financial reports.
- Reports finances of establishment to management, and advises about resource utilization, tax strategies, and assumptions underlying budget forecasts.
- Develops and documents budgeting and other accounting systems.
- Predicts revenues and expenditures, and submits reports to management.
- Computes taxes owed, ensures compliance with tax requirements, and represents establishment before taxing authority.
- Surveys establishment operations to ascertain accounting needs.
- Establishes table of accounts, and assigns entries to proper accounts.

- Audits contracts, and prepares reports to substantiate transactions.
- Prepares forms and manuals for workers performing accounting and bookkeeping tasks.
- Appraises, evaluates, and inventories real property and equipment, and records information.
- Adapts accounting and record keeping functions to current technology of accounting systems.
- Directs activities of workers performing accounting and bookkeeping tasks.

## Skills Needed

- Mathematics
- Reading Comprehension
- Information Organization
- Management of Financial Resources
- Judgment and Decision Making
- Identifying Downstream Consequences
- Information Gathering
- Problem Identification
- Systems Evaluation
- Solution Appraisal

## Preparation and Licensing Requirements

### Necessary Education

- Baccalaureate Degree in Accountancy  
150 Credit Hours, **or**
- Related Baccalaureate Degree with  
at least 27 Credit Hours in Accounting  
(18 from Upper Division Courses)

### Certification

This occupation requires certification in Missouri. The Missouri State Board of Accountancy gives the licensing exam to approved applicants. A passing grade on all 4 parts is required for certification. To receive a permit to practice on a solo basis, successful candidates must gain 2 years experience under the supervision of a CPA with a valid permit.

### Job Outlook

- Job opportunities for Accountants are expected to be good.
- Employment is expected to grow about as fast as the average for all occupations.
- Numerous job openings will come from the need to replace retiring accountants.
- Competition will be keen for the most prestigious jobs in major accounting and business firms.

Accountants and auditors who have earned professional recognition through certification or licensure should have the best job prospects. Applicants with a master's degree in accounting, or a master's degree in business administration with a concentration in accounting, also will have an advantage in the job market. Proficiency in accounting and auditing computer software, or expertise in specialized areas such as international business, specific industries, or current legislation, may also be helpful in landing certain accounting and auditing jobs. In addition, employers increasingly seek applicants with strong interpersonal and communication skills. Because many accountants work on teams with others from different backgrounds, they must be able to communicate accounting and financial information clearly and concisely.

### For More Information

**Missouri Economic Research & Information Center**  
**Harry S Truman Building, Room 580**  
**Jefferson City, MO 65102**  
**(573) 522-6261**  
**<http://www.MissouriEconomy.org>**

*Other Sources: United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, Missouri CHOICES, O\*Net.*